

News Briefs

AFSA chili cook-off

The Air Force Sergeants Association chili cook-off is from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. today at the community center. Cost is \$4 for a bowl of chili, chips and a drink. For more information, call Tech. Sgt. Terry Patterson at Ext. 2141.

Dorm dinner

The April dorm dinner is at 5 p.m. Thursday at the community center. The menu is Barnhills chicken and fish. For more information, call the chapel at Ext. 2500 or contact a first sergeant.

Dress and appearance

Per Headquarters Air Force Personnel Center, the Lance Armstrong bracelet cannot be worn in uniform. The yellow bracelet supporting a cancer foundation is noble in cause, however it does not meet the conservative criteria outlined in Air Force Instruction 36-2903, Dress and Appearance of Air Force Personnel.

GWOT-S for PACAF Airmen

As authorized by Executive Order 13289, all U.S. military members assigned or mobilized to Pacific Air Forces for at least 30 consecutive or 60 nonconsecutive days from Sept. 11, 2001, to a date to be determined, are awarded the Global War On Terrorism Service Medal. Eligible Airmen must provide proof of assignment, attachment or mobilization to the military personnel flight career enhancement office to update their personnel records.

Inside



FEATURE 10

BLAZE TEAM helps welcome injured Marine home from Iraq.

Columbus Air Force Base, Miss.

April 15, 2005

Breakfast of champions



Airman 1st Class Cecilia Rodríguez

In celebration of the Month of the Military Child, the commissary provided an in-store cereal breakfast April 7 for more than 20 child development center children, including Briton Howell, 3, Madison Smith, 4, and Jacob Salas, 3. For more information about special activities for base children and their families throughout the Month of the Military Child, call the child development center at Ext. 2479.

Clinic appointments now available online

Patients of the 14th Medical Group can now book appointments on line at www.tricareonline.com any time of the day.

First time users can complete the registration process and book an appointment in as little as five minutes. Passwords are confirmed instantly, so there is no waiting period.

After logging in, patients should click on “appointments.” Next, they should scroll down to select a visit rea-

son. All available appointments within the access of care standard for the visit reason will then be displayed. Access to care standards is as follows:

Acute appointment: Urgent problem, must be seen within 24 hours

Routine appointment: Problem not urgent, must be seen within seven days

Wellness appointment: Must be seen within 28 days

An example of a wellness appoint-

ment would be a patient’s first visit with his or her primary care manager.

The Tricare Online Web site is also full of healthcare information for all ages. For example, there are health-care-related educational game links available for children and healthy living tips for adults.

BLAZE TEAM members are encouraged to log on and discover all the benefits that Tricare Online has to offer. *(Courtesy of the 14th MDG)*

Air Force announces Thrift Savings Plan open season

RANDOLPH AFB, Texas — Civilian and military employees can sign up for, or change, their Thrift Savings Plan contribution amounts during the “open season” April 15 through June 30.

“TSP is a long-term retirement savings plan, which everyone should consider,” said Jackie Holland, Air Force Personnel Contact Center task manager. “It’s a great supplement to military and civilian retirement plans.

“It’s also important to note that TSP is not limited to investing in stocks,” Ms. Holland said. “People can choose safer government securities as well.”

This open season applies only to regular TSP contributions. It does not include TSP catch-up contributions, as they are not tied to open seasons, according to Janet Thomas, of AFPC’s civilian benefits and entitlements service team.

TSP offers investors the chance for lower taxes each year they contribute while not having to pay taxes on earnings until they reach retirement.

“Eligible employees can take out loans and make in-service withdrawals from their TSP accounts,” Ms. Thomas said. “And you can keep your account, even if you leave military or federal civilian service.”

Investment money is deposited directly from each paycheck “so you never have to think about it,” Ms. Holland said. “That makes it easy to ‘pay yourself first’ while only investing what you deem appropriate.”

The five TSP funds are: the Government Securities Investment (G) Fund; the Common Stock Index Investment (C) Fund; the Fixed Income Index Investment (F) Fund; the Small Capitalization Stock Index Investment

(S) Fund; and the International Stock Index Investment (I) Fund. TSP also hopes to make “Lifecycle” funds available mid-2005. Lifecycle funds are ‘target asset allocation portfolios’ that will hold a mix of the five funds currently available. The mix of funds is chosen based on the date the employee expects to need money for retirement. The Thrift Board is still working out the details. In the meantime, a series of questions and answers on the lifecycle funds can be found on the TSP Web site at www.tsp.gov/curinfo/specint/LFC-Qs&As.html. Additional publicity will be issued when final details become available.

“As with any individual retirement account, the sooner you begin contributing, the better,” Ms. Thomas said.

Contribution elections and/or changes made between April 15 and June 11 will take effect June 12, for both military and civilian personnel. Changes made on or after June 12 will become effective at the beginning of the pay period following the one in which the election is made for civilians and the following month for military.

Public Law 108-469, signed into law Dec. 21, 2004, will eliminate TSP open seasons. The Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board is implementing this law effective July 1, 2005. As a result, beginning July 1, civilian employees and military members may start, change, stop, or resume contributions at any time. For civilians the elections will be effective at the beginning of the pay period following the one in which submitted, and for military members elections will be effective the following month.

Some of the specifics of the program include:

Military

— Military members can contribute up to 10 percent of their base pay, as long as the annual total of tax-deferred investment doesn’t exceed \$14,000 for 2005. Airmen also have the ability to invest all or part of their bonuses or special pay.

— Those serving in tax-free combat zones are allowed up to \$42,000 in annual contributions.

— Military members can enroll through the Defense Finance and Accounting Service web site at www.dfas.mil/emss/. They can also enroll by filling out a form TSP-U-1 at local military personnel flights, finance offices and family support centers.

— Contribution allocations (how an employee chooses to invest money among the five funds) can be made by calling the TSP automated ThriftLine (877) 968-3778 for members in the 50 States, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa and Canada, or (504) 255-8777 for members elsewhere, or on the TSP web site at www.tsp.gov/. For general TSP questions, call the Air Force Personnel Contact Center at (800) 616-3775.

— Specific TSP information is available for Air Force military personnel at www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/mpf/TSP/thrift_savings_plan.htm.

Civilian

Contribution limits are based on which retirement system an employee has. For the current open season, the following contribution rates apply:

— Federal Employees’ Retirement System employees may contribute up to 15 percent of basic pay each pay period. Once eligible, the government provides matching funds of up to four percent as well as an automatic one percent each pay period, whether the employee contributes or not, making the government’s contribution five percent.

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SILVER WINGS

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Submission Deadline

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COLUMBUS AFB TRAINING TIMELINE

PHASE II

Squadron	Senior Class	Squadron Overall	Track Select
37th (06-01)	3.23 days	-0.89 days	April 22
41st (06-02)	0.23 days	-0.21 days	May 17

PHASE III

Squadron	Senior Class	Squadron Overall	Graduation
48th (05-08)	8.58 days	2.45 days	April 29
50th (05-08)	-4.20 days	-2.11 days	April 29

WING SORTIE BOARD

Aircraft	Required	Flown	Annual
T-37	1,294	887	15,282
T-38C	553	502	7,954
T-1A	519	440	7,089

Graduation speaker: Maj. Gen. Robert Elder Jr., Air War College commandant

14TH FLYING TRAINING WING DEPLOYED

As of press time, **21 BLAZE TEAM** members are deployed worldwide.

Remember to support the troops and their families while they are away.



Senior Airman Shawn Arnett
14th Communications Squadron



Airman Arnett was recently recognized for his effort to meet two mission taskings at once. While on duty as a security forces augmentee, he learned that a pilot navigational aid had malfunctioned. Rather than recall a fellow maintenance troop, he performed a “security check” on the TACAN facility, enabling him to reset the equipment and allow the flying mission to continue uninterrupted.

Rumsfeld supports extended careers, longer duty tours

Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said he would like to see sweeping changes to the military services' personnel systems.

In particular, Secretary Rumsfeld said, he would like to do away with the system that forces servicemembers out at the prime of their careers and moves people between jobs too quickly.

The system that moves people up then out when they are "at the peak of their capabilities" does the country "a big disservice," the secretary said.

Secretary Rumsfeld said he is frequently frustrated to see top-notch servicemembers, many just 38 or 40 years old, forced to leave the military — taking with them extensive experience they could share with others.

"Why would we do that?" he said. "Why wouldn't we want that person around, and the confidence and knowledge and experience" the individual brings to the table?

Yet, despite widespread recognition of what such servicemembers are still capable of contributing, Secretary Rumsfeld said the personnel system "just keeps shoving them up and out."

Secretary Rumsfeld acknowledged that not

everyone wants to extend their military careers, but he said those who do "should not be penalized or prevented from doing that."

The secretary said he would also like to change the system that moves people too quickly from one job to the next.

"We've found an awful lot of wonderfully talented people who have moved through their positions too fast," he said.

"How do you learn? You learn in life by doing things and sometimes making mistakes, being there to see the mistake (and) correcting the mistake," he said.

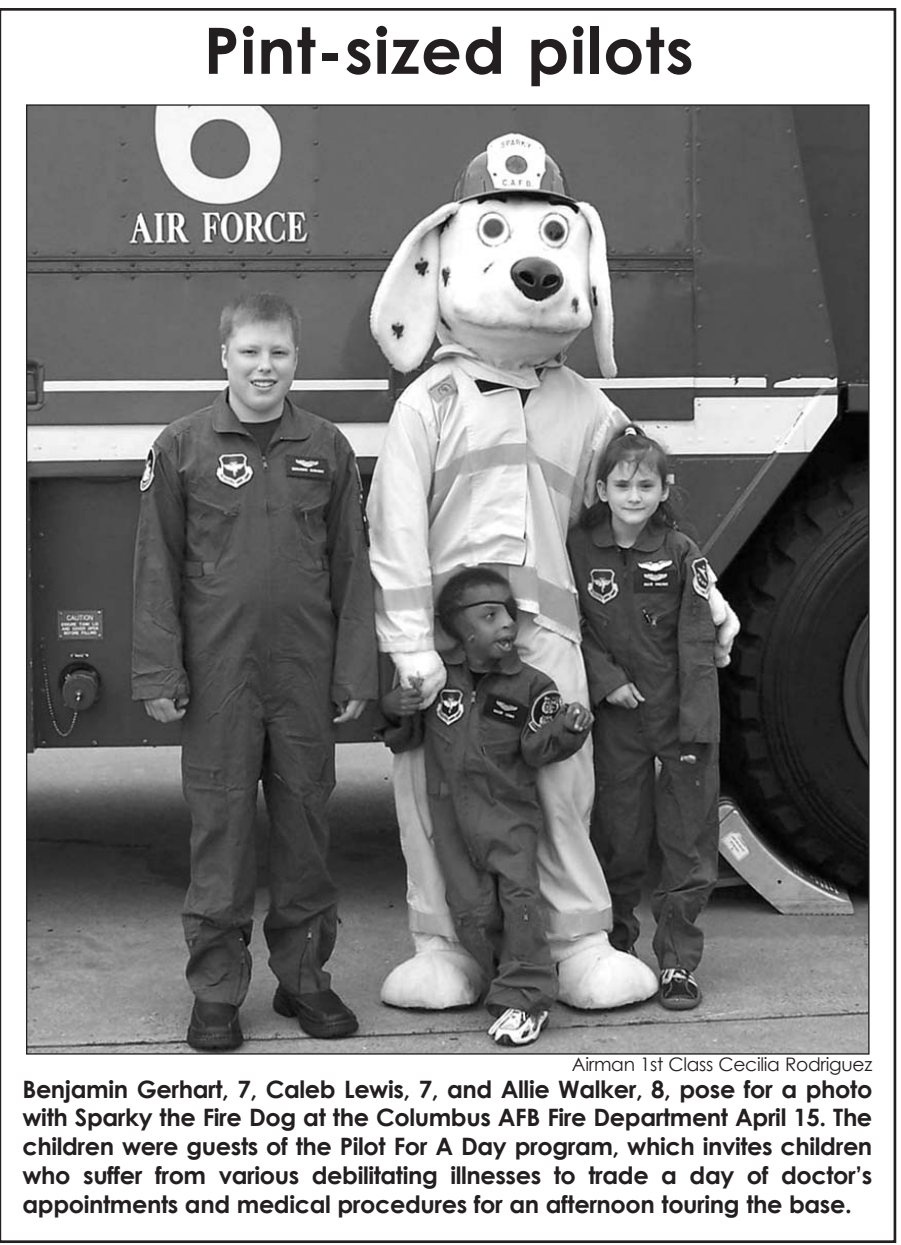
Spending too little time in one job cuts this process short and keeps people from getting the in-depth experience they need to master the job, Secretary Rumsfeld said.

"You spend some time getting familiar with (a job), some time doing it, then some time leaving," he said. "And you don't really get very good at it, and you are rarely around long enough to get down to the second and third level of knowledge and confidence."

Extending duty assignments would increase servicemembers' competence in their jobs, save the Defense Department in moving costs and reduce the disruption constant moves impose on the military.

At the same time, extended tour lengths would reduce the disruption military life imposes on families.

"We bring families in today, not just military personnel, and to the extent that we can keep people with fewer (moves), there is less disruption on kids in school and less disruption for spouse employment practices," Secretary Rumsfeld said. "And that's a good thing."



Airman 1st Class Cecilia Rodriguez
Benjamin Gerhart, 7, Caleb Lewis, 7, and Allie Walker, 8, pose for a photo with Sparky the Fire Dog at the Columbus AFB Fire Department April 15. The children were guests of the Pilot For A Day program, which invites children who suffer from various debilitating illnesses to trade a day of doctor's appointments and medical procedures for an afternoon touring the base.

TSP

(Continued from Page 2)

— Employees covered by the Civil Service Retirement System may contribute up to 10 percent of basic pay, but do not receive any agency contributions.

— Beginning in December 2005, there will no longer be percentage limits on how much FERS and CSRS employees may contribute each year. Contributions will be restricted only by the Internal Revenue Code's annual limit, which is \$15,000 for 2006.

— Specific information is available for civilian employees from the Thrift Savings Plan web site at www.tsp.gov/ and the BEST homepage at www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/dpc/BEST/menu.htm.

[randolph.af.mil/dpc/BEST/menu.htm](http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/dpc/BEST/menu.htm).

— All Air Force-serviced civilian employees will make their TSP contribution elections or changes electronically through the Web-based Employee Benefits Information System at www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/dpc/BEST_GRB/EBIS.htm or through the BEST automated phone system at (800) 616-3775. Hearing impaired employees may contact BEST by calling TDD (800) 382-0893 or commercial 565-2276 within San Antonio, Texas. Overseas employees will dial the AT&T Direct Access Number for the country they are calling from and then enter (800) 616-3775. AT&T Direct Access Numbers can be obtained from access instructions can be obtained from www.business.att.com/bt/dial_guide.jsp.

Counselors are available weekdays from 7 a.m. - 6 p.m. Central Time.

— Contribution allocations (how an employee chooses to invest their money among the five funds) are made via the "Account Access" section of the TSP website (www.tsp.gov), or by calling the ThriftLine — (877) 968-3778 for employees in the 50 States, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa and Canada; (504) 255-8777 for employees elsewhere).

More information about the Thrift Savings Plan can be found in the booklet "Summary of the Thrift Savings Plan" on the TSP home page under civilian or uniformed services TSP Forms and Publications. *(Courtesy of AFPC News Service)*

All BLAZE TEAM members and their families are invited to participate in this Earth Day event. Volksmarchers will begin at 8 a.m. and runners will begin at 9 a.m. in front of the fitness and sports center.

Children younger than 12 who sign up at the fitness center will receive a medal. The first

100 adults (ages 12 and older) to sign up at the fitness center by close of business today will receive free t-shirts.

Water stations will be available at every two miles along the Perimeter Road course. Families are also invited to bring their dogs. For more information, call Ext. 7724.



Columbus AFB Earth Day 10.7-mile Run & Family Volksmarch April 23

AF Portal chat requires decorum

Tech. Sgt. David A. Jablonski
Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON — Airmen are chatting it up in growing numbers using the Air Force Portal's instant messaging service.

But recent inappropriate comments made by some Airmen in chat rooms led officials to clarify responsible communication over the service.

"The majority of the 7,000 plus Airmen using (Air Force Instant Messenger) in a given week are using it exactly as it was intended," said Maj. David Gindhart, Air Staff lead for the portal. "Unfortunately, a small group of individuals forgot that our core values, military decorum and professionalism still apply when in a chat room."

It is no different than having a conversation on or off base, whether in uniform or not. Airmen cannot forget who they are talking to and that they are representing the Air Force, he said.

"This is especially troubling when ranks appear on the screen," Major Gindhart said. "Some officers and senior (noncommissioned officers) forget they are setting the example for younger Airmen."

Officials in the Air Force chief information office recently defined inappropriate use and clarified chat guidelines.

Inappropriate use includes sexual harassment, sexually explicit, or racist dialogue. In addition, while the instant messenger supports informal dialogue, the Air Force military rank structure establishes expectations for leader responsibility and accountability.

Air Force Instruction 33-129, Web Management and Internet Use, covers the use of Internet resources by government employees. Military Equal Opportunity, AFI 36-2706, describes the limits of professional communication.

Certain controls and conditions have also been added, officials said. A warning banner reminds Airmen they have no expectation of privacy and use of the system is consent to monitoring. The service is limited to official and authorized appropriate use and cannot contain classified information or operational security information.

Chats may be logged, creating an official record. A self-monitoring system allows users to report misuse, but other forms of monitoring will take place, officials said.

Besides defining inappropriate use, officials listed specific prohibitions:

- Activity that causes system degradation.
- Inappropriate or offensive material.
- Illegal activities.
- Sexually explicit or sexually oriented material.
- Business, fundraising, lobbying or political activities.

Emergency data goes virtual

Headquarters Air Force Personnel Center approved paperless Records of Emergency Data April 1. Military personnel flights were directed to remove all paper copies from the unit personnel record groups.

With the onset of this new process, it is very important that virtual of emergency data information is correct and current. All active-duty personnel must have a current vRED and are encouraged to view their vRED at the virtual military personnel flight Web site at least once a year and any time changes occur. Common reasons that require changes to a vRED include marriage, divorce, birth of children or death of spouse, children or parents.

People who deploy must make sure their deployment manager has two copies of their most current vRED. Members must not deploy with incorrect vRED information on file.

Here are a few tips to prevent common errors on emergency data records:

- * The vRED address is a member's personal location, not home of record. Dormitory residents must include their building and room numbers.
- * Duty phone is best listed as DSN. If using a commercial number, be sure to include the "662" area code.
- * Include area codes with home phone numbers for spouses and children who live in the local area.
- * Base residents should include "AFB" after "Columbus" to distinguish between living on or off the base.
- * People who include post office box, rural route or country road listings must include directions from the closest main road to their home in the "remarks" section. This will assist with the next-of-kin notification process.
- * People who make corrections to an already established vRED must save their progress before re-submitting the information by clicking the button at the bottom of each page. For more information, call Sue Lowry at Ext. 2720. *(Courtesy of the 14th Mission Support Squadron)*

COSC scholars



Airman 1st Class Cecilia Rodriguez
Columbus Officers' Spouses' Club scholarship recipients Ashley Altizer, Charlie Burgess, Sophia Parham, Sean Armstrong and Veronica Lestina were recognized at the COSC social Wednesday at the Columbus Club.

Career Assistance Advisor Tip of the Week

At my 15-year mark in the Air Force, I elected to take the Redux/CSB (Career Status Bonus) retirement option. Do I receive all the money right away?

As of Dec. 28, 2001, servicemembers may elect one of five options to receive the \$30,000 bonus: one lump sum payment of \$30,000; two annual payments of \$15,000; three annual payments of \$10,000; four annual payments of \$7,500; or five annual payments of \$6,000.

For more information, call Master Sgt. Shelli Fisher at Ext. 7004.

Diversity helps nation grow stronger

Lt. Col. William Millonig
37th Flying Training
Squadron



Last week we said farewell to the most recent graduates of the Aviation Leadership Program. As I reflected on their stay here, I realized that particularly at Columbus AFB, one of the things that has changed most about specialized undergraduate pilot training is the diverse nature of our people.

In any given class, you might see a Central American, an Eastern European, a guardsman from Puerto Rico, a reservist from Hawaii and active-duty folks from all over the map.

We had some international students years ago, but not as many as today; and the U.S. students were all active duty. You never saw an instructor pilot who came from helicopters, or sent a student to Corpus Christi, Texas, for Phase III training. Today's SUPT provides us a unique opportunity to learn about other cultures, services, missions and deployment schedules among other things. As our Total Force concept continues to

evolve, that understanding becomes even more important as we work together to defend our nation's security interests around the world.

One of the ALP students talked about the stereotype of Americans in his country — which wasn't very good — and how he couldn't wait to get home to tell them what we were really like.

Here's a guy who showed up with an open mind, worked hard to earn his wings and along the way he learned some valuable insight about what it is to be "American."

During the last presidential election as I watched the national map fill in with blue and red states, I wondered if we are doing enough in our country to be open-minded. The freedom of choice that our country is founded on

— freedom of religion, of speech, to vote, etc. — can polarize us. Take some time to reflect on what effect it may have on you. Do you listen only to talk/news shows on your side of the political spectrum or do you listen to the other side as well? Does knowing that a person goes to a certain church or is a "Californian" change your perception of them?

The diverse nature of our people makes it increasingly important that we challenge stereotypes, not spread them. Remember — when we put on

our uniform, we don't just defend the people who think like us; but perhaps more importantly, we also defend those who don't.

“Remember — when we put on our uniform, we don't just defend the people who think like us; but perhaps more importantly, we also defend those who don't.”

not weaker through division — and continue to show the world what it is to be "American."

ed. However, there are many more.

As just one further example, for someone who is experiencing depression and anxiety as a result of stress, the use of alcohol and drugs can make them even more depressed or anxious. This heightened depression and anxiety can then lead them to act in ways that are destructive — both for themselves and for others.

Plan ahead of time. If you and your friends are going out and there is a possibility that you will be drinking, have a plan to prevent those who are drunk from driving. Some options include having one friend act as a designated driver.

Also, it might be helpful if you make sure your designated driver is not drinking alcohol. Every time you order yourself a drink, buy your designated driver something non-alcoholic to drink. Alternatively, consider carrying an extra \$20 or \$30 so that you can use taxi services to return home.

Also keep in mind that the First Sergeants' Council has recently coordinated efforts with the City Wide Cab Company and established the BLAZE Dial-A-Ride program. If you have been drinking and do not have a designated driver, contact the City Wide Cab Company at 329-2041. If you show your military ID to the driver, you will be provided a form to sign stating that you will reimburse the First Sergeant Council for the amount owed.

Letter to the editor

During Saturday's career day our 5-year-old son fell out of an emergency exit on the C-17 static display knocking himself unconscious.

By the grace of God, he is doing great and came home from the hospital with only a bad headache and "cool stories" to tell his friends about falling six feet from an airplane and riding in an ambulance with the siren on.

My wife and I certainly did not have as much fun during the incident; we were terrified.

However, the response of our Air Force Family made us realize, once again, how much the people in this wonderful organization have been part of for the last 11 years mean to us.

The response of the base fire department and the initial calm they brought to the situation was incredible!

The Career Day staff and base safety personnel immediately contacted the emergency medical technicians and started arranging to care for our 3-year-old daughter while my wife and I went to Baptist Memorial Hospital.

Mr. John Lewis, Capt. John Vito, Lt. Col. Jeffrey Kindley and Lt. Col. Mike Mangus — thank you all for your urgency and care during the incident.

Lt. Col. William and Susan Millonig and Lt. Col. Todd White — your support and concern during the crisis were indispensable to our family.

Dr. Keith McCoy — thank you for the wonderful medical care that you and the staff of Baptist Memorial provided our son. We are lucky to have you as an Air Force physician.

To the entire Todd Family, thank you for being such wonderful people. We are blessed to call you our friends.

Incredibly, by the time we arrived home about three hours after the incident, it seemed that the entire base community had pulled together to pray for our family and provide support when we needed it most.

Our wonderful friends and neighbors made it clear that this is truly our home.

The Air Force is an amazing place to live and work. It is blessed with an abundance of hard-working, caring and capable people who constantly take care of one another.

It is said that "friends are our chosen family." On Saturday, we were reminded that the Air Force is in fact our "chosen family." Thank you all from the bottom of our hearts.

Maj. Kelly Holbert, Bobbi, Tyler and Madison

Chief of Staff Sight Picture Officer force development: International Affairs Specialists

Gen. John Jumper
Air Force Chief of Staff



We are an expeditionary Air Force. To continue our success far from home, we must deliberately develop a cadre of Air Force professionals with international insight, foreign language proficiency, and cultural understanding — Airmen who have the right skill sets to understand the specific regional context in which air and space power may be applied.

In the past, we used the Foreign Area Officer program to identify officers who possessed the cultural and linguistic skills necessary for our expeditionary operations. However, we only

identified those who had acquired such skills on their own. We did not deliberately select or train officers to develop the regional skills the Air Force needs.

Furthermore, few FOAs were actually assigned to international duties and there was a perception that doing so would harm an officer's career.

We did not actively develop this important capability or create a career path.

Today's security environment demands officers with international skills. The FAO program is no longer sufficient to meet our requirement, so we are replacing it with a program that selects, develops, and deliberately employs officers as international affairs specialists.

Beginning this summer/fall, our functional development teams and IAS functional managers will identify mid-career line officers with potential to excel as international affairs specialists and select them for development.

They will attend comprehensive Developmental Education programs aimed at developing a strong foundation in international affairs, while remaining fully proficient and competitive in their primary Air Force specialties. They will be chosen for one of two tracks:

— Regional Affairs Strategists will earn a regionally oriented graduate degree followed by basic and advanced language training (three years total). They will then alternate assignments between their primary Air Force specialty codes and RAS duty.

— Political-Military Affairs Strategists will earn an

international affairs-related degree (one year only).

They will develop broader, less specialized skills that will be used in career broadening assignments; the goal of this part of the program is to develop officers in line specialties with an advanced awareness of the international context in which we will apply air and space power.

The IAS program will be important to all Airmen, not only those selected for this training. All of you are part of an expeditionary Air Force, and will benefit from the expertise brought by IASs to AEF deployments and overseas assignments.

Over the next few months, the assignment teams, led by the guidance provided by the development teams, will be able to provide officers with the details on how their specific AFSC will manage IAS selection, senior rater involvement, as well as how to volunteer.

This is a Force Development culture change that will develop a global cadre for international affairs. The goal is clear — develop professional Airmen with international insight, foreign language proficiency, and cultural understanding.

This is a crucial force multiplier that will significantly increase the effectiveness of air and space power.

Here's a sobering thought.



Even a little alcohol can affect your judgment, balance and coordination. The fact is, almost half of the riders who die in solo motorcycle crashes have been drinking. Play it safe. Don't start drinking until you've finished riding.



(800) 446-9227 • www.msf-usa.org

Straight Talk Line

The Straight Talk Line is your direct line to the commander for comments and suggestions on how to make Columbus AFB better. The Straight Talk Line phone number is 434-7058. Callers should leave their full name and phone number to receive an answer. All names are kept confidential.

Written questions may be dropped off at the public affairs office in the wing headquarters building, Bldg. 724. People can also access the Straight Talk program through the Blazeweb at <https://columbusweb> and the main Web site at www.columbus.af.mil. Questions and answers will be edited for brevity.

ALCOHOL

(Continued from Page 5)

Taxi cab costs range from \$20 locally to \$39 from Starkville, Miss. — a far cry better than \$4,500 to \$7,000 in fines, court fees, a DUI and a potential end to your Air Force career.

Another option is to simply contact the command post at Ext. 7020 and ask to be connected to your first sergeant, who will willingly pick you

up and save you even more money.

If you are having a party, take steps to prevent drinking and driving. Collect car keys, serve food with alcohol (especially high protein foods like cheese and meats), use non-carbonated bases such as fruit juice for alcoholic punch, serve non-alcoholic beverages, do not force drinks on your guests and stop serving alcohol about two hours before the party is over.

For impaired guests, suggest that

you or a sober friend drive them home, suggest that they stay the night, or have them take a taxi home, whether the ride is at their cost or yours.

If we do not take steps to end alcohol-related incidences, alcohol may end us. It can end relationships, productivity, careers and lives.

The message is simple and clear: Alcohol is a drug, and it can kill. If you drink, drink responsibly, and never drink and drive!

Ben Brock

Irresponsible alcohol consumption could end your AF career

Capt. Colin Burchfield
14th Medical Operations Squadron

With the current Air Force climate and the trends of force shaping, there is an increasing likelihood that even minor alcohol-related incidences may have enormous and negative impacts on one's career.

Unfortunately, there appears to be an increasing number of alcohol-related incidences reported at Columbus AFB.

There are many potential factors associated with this rise. However, the potential consequences remain the same. With the prevention of these potential consequences in mind, I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate some important pointers concerning responsible alcohol consumption:

Remind each other that alcohol and drugs are not the answer for stress. Whether for yourself or for your friends, going out and drinking or drugging does not improve stress-related difficulties. Instead, it can sometimes lead to even more negative consequences.

Some of these consequences have already been suggest-



The journey home



Right: Thirty friends and family members arrived at Columbus AFB Saturday afternoon to welcome Corporal Rollins home.

Top: About 50 BLAZE TEAM members volunteered to welcome home Marine Lance Cpl. Thomas Rollins by forming a flightline honor detail as he was unloaded from a C-130 medical evacuation aircraft Saturday at Columbus AFB. Left: Twenty-year-old Corporal Rollins, pictured here with fellow members from his 4th Battalion, 14th Marines unit, was injured in a Hummer roll-over accident Feb. 10 while serving a six-month deployment in Iraq.



Photos by Elizabeth Owens

Story by
Tech. Sgt. Keith Houin
14th Flying Training Wing

As Career Day aerial demonstrations ended around 1 p.m. Saturday, another event began to unfold at the old SAC Alert facility. In the sky above, a C-130 Hercules made its descent to Columbus AFB for the first of a five-leg aeromedical evacuation mission.

Lt. Gen. Walter Buchanan, 9th Air Force commander, and Col. Stephen Wilson, 14th Flying Training Wing commander, an ambulance and crew, and a blue bus filled with Columbus AFB Airmen volunteers waited patiently on the alert pad.

Once the C-130 was parked, the waiting party made its way to the rear of the aircraft with military precision. The ambulance backed in about 100 feet away from the tail, two lines of Airmen forming an honor detail from the cargo ramp of the C-130 to the ambulance as General Buchanan gave directions.

Meanwhile, a contingent of six Marines from the 4th Battalion, 14th Marines made their way onboard the aircraft.

Moments later, with the honor detail coming to attention, the Marines exited carrying 20-year-old Marine Lance Cpl. Thomas Rollins on a stretcher, his mother and grandmother close behind. The general gave the order and the formation saluted, holding the honor until the injured Marine had passed the last Airman.

Corporal Rollins was only a few weeks away from completing his tour in Iraq when he was in a Hummer roll-over accident that crushed his lower body Feb. 10.

Thirty family members watched from outside the fence and waited to follow the war veteran to the base clinic where they could welcome him home with handshakes, hugs and kisses.

It was obvious on the faces of so many there that this moment was special. Columbus AFB did a good thing.

We made an injured warrior's return home a little bit better. We showed his relatives what it means to be part of the military family. We showed the Marines that we care about them, just like we care about our own.

This small event, carved out of a busy afternoon during Career Day, reflects what the BLAZE TEAM is all about.

All of the Airmen filling the honor detail, from stripes to stars, were volunteers. Each gave up their time off to be there, and a number of other volunteers were turned away.

The reasons why each volunteered is personal, and we will probably never know them all. In the end, it doesn't really matter. All that matters is we helped a fellow warrior complete his journey home.

USAFA hosts adventurous camp for teens, parents

Pam Wickham
14th Services Division

The first Headquarters U.S. Air Force Academy Parent/Teen Outdoor Adventure Camp is scheduled for June 26 through July 3 in Colorado Springs, Colo.

The camp is for families of deployed active-duty Air Force, Air Force Reserves, Air National Guard, their spouses and dependents ages 12 to 14. Priority will be given to families of deployed Air Force and Air Force

Reserve personnel, but applications will be accepted from all families that meet the eligibility criteria. Air Force-wide, 50 participants will be selected to attend the camp.

Rock climbing, hiking, horseback riding and white water rafting will highlight the week's events for teens and their parents.

Families will need to pay for their own transportation, but all lodging, meals and activity fees will be funded at no cost to the attendees.

"The week long program is focused on

creating a bonding experience for families through participation in various outdoor and indoor activities," said Rose Lime, Columbus AFB youth director. "Each person must be physically able to participate in some strenuous indoor and outdoor events."

Youth interested in attending the camp must complete an application form and write a one-page essay using one of the following topics:

* What do you want to get out of spending a week in Colorado with your parent?

* How what different ways would you like to contribute to your family?

* What would you like to learn at the camp in Colorado that would allow you to provide better support for your family?

Applications and essays must be submitted to the youth center director by May 2 for validation and forwarding to a committee who will make final selections by May 27.

For more information or for an application, stop by the youth center or call Ext. 2504.

Recreational opportunities available for base people

Reduced lunch buffet prices: The Columbus Club offers a different buffet Tuesday through Thursday. Cost is now \$5.95 for club members and \$7.95 for nonmembers. Tuesday features Mexican cuisine, Wednesday is country-style cooking, Thursday has an Italian flare and Fridays offer a tri-continental selection of German, Asian and New England seafood. This week's introductory rate of \$4.95 per person is offered to all retired military. Call Ext. 2490.

Home decor classes: The skills development center is offers a class at 10:30 a.m. or 6:30 p.m. April 28 to make a

bamboo inlaid end table for \$20. Cost includes all supplies. Call Ext. 7836.

Stampin' Up camp: Create five stamping projects with all supplies included during this camp from 1 to 3 p.m. April 23. Cost is \$15 per person with a \$5 discount for new students. To register, call 434-5076.

Children's Tea Party: Participants must register by Monday for this tea party for mothers and their children at 10:30 a.m. April 30 at the community center. Cost is \$12 for

one mother and child pair and \$5 for each additional guest. For reservations, call 243-1428 or 574-7689.

Scrapbooking workshop: Celebrate National Scrapbook Day April 23 at the Community Center with a complete day of scrapbooking from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The event is open to all levels of scrapbookers. Cost is \$20 for the entire day or \$10 for four hours. The lunch fee is \$5. To register, call Lynn Bridges at 434-6935 by Tuesday. A May workshop is from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. May 14.

Youth center trips: Participants must register at the youth center by Thursday for the teen shopping and movie trip to Meridian, Miss., April 23. Cost is \$5 for member and \$8 for nonmembers. Call Ext. 2504.

Beale Street Music Festival: The information, ticket and travel office offers a trip to this festival in Memphis, Tenn., April 30 through May 1. The festival features bands of rock, gospel, rhythm and blues and alternative genres. Cost is \$135 per person for club members and \$150 per person for nonmembers. Cost includes transportation and two nights lodging (double occupancy). Tickets to the music festival are sold separately. A \$50 deposit is required. Call Ext. 7861.

Earn money selling ice cream: The 14th Services Division is looking for someone interested in selling ice cream and popsicles throughout the base housing areas during the summer months. Call Ext. 2405.

NAF sale: The 14th Services Division sponsors a non-appropriated fund equipment sale from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday at outdoor recreation. Call Ext. 7861.

Summer vacations to Disney World, Universal Studios: The information, ticket and travel office offers this trip to Orlando, Fla., June 7 through June 11. Cost is \$415 for one person, \$265 each for two people, \$215 each for three people and \$190 each for four people with the same lodging accommodations. Costs include four nights lodging, transportation and an Orlando shuttle service. Reduced price ticket packages are available at ITT. Call Ext. 7861.



Borda Jones

Megan Evers, Capt. Georgeann White, 14th Services Division, Steve Harris and John Park, 14th SVS, finish the last leg of the March fun run in front of the fitness and sports center. The 14th Civil Engineer Environmental Flight and fitness center host a 10.7-mile Earth Day family volkswarmch from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. April 23 around Perimeter Road. For more information, call Ext. 2772.

Family Support Center

Editor's note: All activities are offered at the family support center unless otherwise specified. For more information about any of the activities listed, call Ext. 2790.)

Spouse welcome
A welcome reception for spouses new to Columbus AFB is from 10 to 11 a.m. Wednesdays at the Magnolia Inn Lobby. Spouses will receive gifts and information about the family support center.

Humor prescriptions
A video workshop about how humor can reduce stress is from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Wednesday. Participants should bring a sack lunch. Registration is required by Tuesday.

Kids and cash
In recognition of the Month of the Military Child, this seminar about money matters for children is at 4 p.m. Thursday at the youth center.

Sponsorship training
A workshop designed for all unit introduction monitors is at 9 a.m. April 26. Training includes the importance of effective sponsorship and resources available for both sponsors and newcomers.

Base Notes

Power outages
A power outage impacting only the bowling center is scheduled for 6:30 to 10:30 a.m. Sunday.
A second power outage is scheduled for 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. April 23. The outage will affect the following building numbers:

926, 736, 704, 708, 712, 715, 450, 456, 457, 630, 640, 642, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 629, 820, 830, 836 and 847. For questions or more information, call Venson Shelton at Ext. 5360.

Student spouse group
New and casual status student spouses are invited to join the Columbus Officers' Spouses' Club Student Spouse Group social event at 1 p.m. April 20 at Whispering Pines Golf Course. The group provides spouses with the opportunity to build friendships and resources. To sign up or for more information, contact Veronica Lestina at (319) 931-0980 or veronickins@hotmail.com.

COSC social
The Columbus Officers' Spouses' Club board members host a southern belle bingo COSC social at 6:30 p.m. May 10 at the Columbus Club. Officers for the 2005-2006 will be elected. The menu is fried chicken, cost is \$10 per person and Columbus Club members receive a \$2 discount. New members are welcome. For reservations, call Cammy Cheater at 434-8915 by noon May 5.

Case lot sale
The commissary and base exchange will sponsor a case lot sale from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. May 6 and from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. May 7. For more information, call Ext. 7109.

Chapel Schedule

Protestant announcements
A combined worship service will be held April 24 and May 1; there will be no contemporary service at the community center. April 24 will be the last day Sunday

school classes will be located in Building 1052. Classes will resume in the chapel annex May 1.
April 27 will be the last day for Pioneers Club. For more information, call the chapel at Ext. 2500.

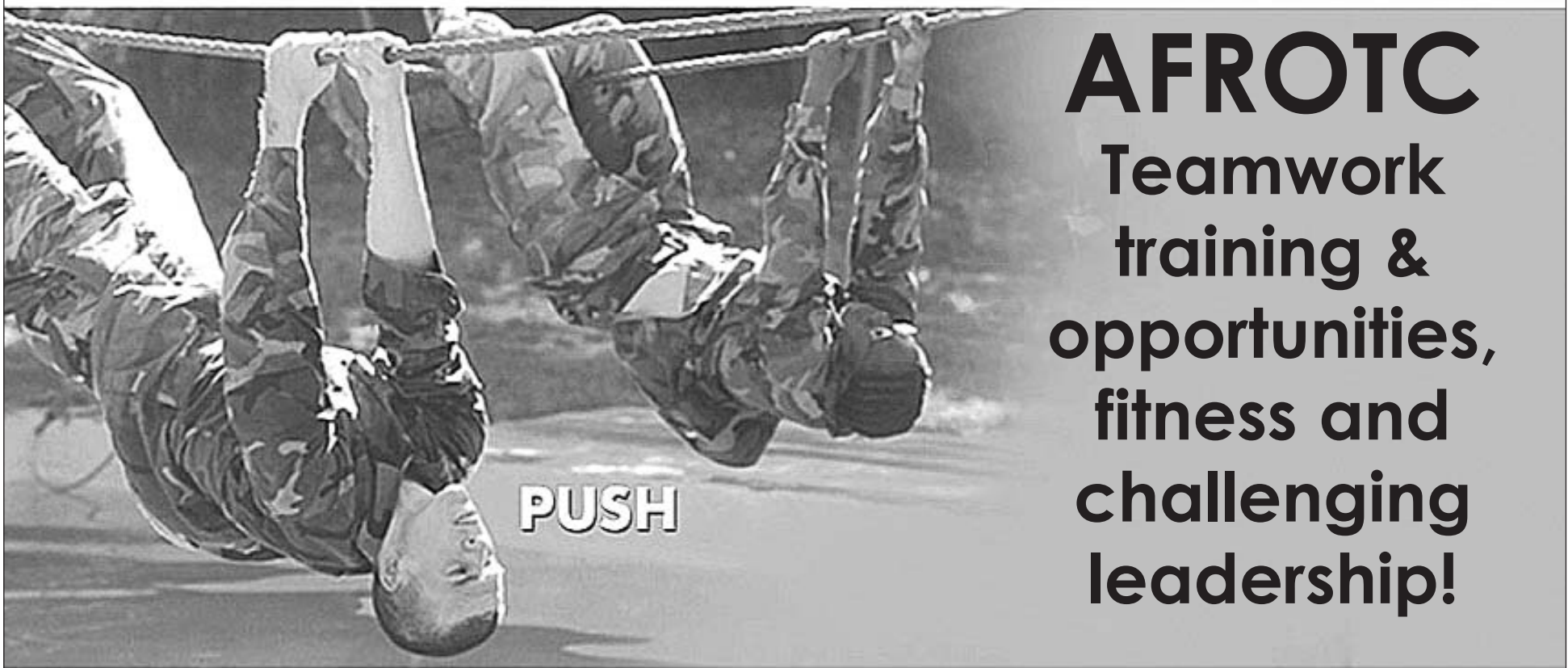

Chapel yard sale
The base chapel sponsors a yard sale at 7 a.m. May 7. Donations for the sale may be dropped off at the chapel front office. The funds collected will benefit the new chapel kitchen and annex. For more information, call Senior Airman Manuel Avendano at Ext. 2500.

Catholic
Sunday:
9:15 a.m. — Mass
10:45 a.m. — CCD at Bldg. 1052*
5 p.m. — Confessions
5:30 p.m. — SUPT Mass

Protestant
Sunday:
9 a.m. — Sunday school at Bldg. 1052*
10:30 a.m. — Contemporary worship service at the community center
10:45 — Traditional worship
Tuesday:
11:30 a.m. — Lunch and Bible study
Wednesday:
6 p.m. — Bible study, Pioneer Clubs, teen ministries at Bldg. 1052
For information about other services, call the base chapel at Ext. 2500.
*The chapel annex is currently being renovated. All religious education activities are temporarily located in Building 1052.

Jewish Passover
The Jewish Passover begins at sundown April 23 and concludes May 1. For more information, call the chapel at Ext. 2500.





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* College Scholarship Program: High school seniors only

For more information, contact Mississippi State University Detachment 425 at (662) 325-3810 or logon to www.msstate.edu/dept/afrotc/

Movies

Today
"Million Dollar Baby"
(PG-13, violence, some disturbing images, thematic material and language, 133 min.)
Starring: Clint Eastwood and Hilary Swank.

Saturday
"Be Cool"
(PG-13, violence, sensuality and language including sexual references, 114 min.)
Starring: John Travolta and Uma Thurman.

All movies are shown at 7 p.m. at the base theater, unless otherwise noted. For more information, visit www.cafb.grapevine.com.

Noon Tunes: Local artists will perform from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Thursday at the Trotter Convention Center Courtyard in downtown Columbus. Call 328-6305.

Nicole Mullen concert: This concert begins at 6:30 p.m. April 22 at the Mississippi University for Women’s Rent Auditorium located at 1100 College St. in downtown Columbus. General admission tickets at \$7 in advance and \$10 at the door. Tickets at \$5 for people with MUW student ID cards. The concert will feature special guests George Huff, American Idol finalist, and MUW’s United Harmony Gospel Ministries. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. For tickets or more information, call 241- 6974.

Chuck Wagon Gang concert: The Chuck Wagon Gang of Fort Worth, Texas, will perform at 7 p.m. April 29 at the Trotter Convention Center. The “Gang” is the single best-selling recording Gospel group in history, having sold more than 36 million recordings in their lifetime. The event is a fund-raising program for the Tenn-Tom Chapter of the American Red Cross. Also featured will be the McAdams Quartet with Don McAdams as emcee. Tickets are \$15.00, and children 12 and under will be admitted free. For more information, call 328-5710.

Great American Clean-Up: Volunteers are needed today to help clean Caldedonia, Miss. For more infor-

mation or to sign up, call (662) 272-5671.

Sears Portrait Studio special: Sears now has “View & Share” technology available at most portrait studios, allowing military families to share their portrait sessions with anyone who has internet access. In addition, military families will receive a 20-percent discount on all in-studio and online portrait orders, which can be combined with any additional advertised or in-store portrait offers. Members must simply have a valid military ID card. For more information, visit www.sears-portrait.com/usa/.

For more event listings, visit www.columbus-ms.org.

BARGAIN LINE

Bargain Line advertisement

The Bargain Line is free for all military members (including guard and reserve members), DOD civilians, military retirees, family members and contract employees.

Bargain Line advertisements must be turned in to the Silver Wings office in the 14th Flying Training Wing headquarters building by noon Monday to be included in the following week's issue. Late ads will be held over for the next issue.

Reruns must be phoned in to the Silver Wings office, 434-7068, by noon Monday for inclusion in the next week's issue. Please do not re-submit ads for rerun on this form. Advertisements should contain a home phone number, home address or both. Duty phone numbers will not appear in the ads.

Advertisements for private businesses or services providing a continuous source of income, such as baby-sitting or rental property, may not appear in the Bargain Line. They may, however, be purchased through the Silver Wings publisher, 328-2424. Please fill out this form completely. The Silver Wings staff reserves the right to edit ads as necessary.

Type of advertisement (circle one) Home Transportation Miscellaneous Yard sales Pets

Print advertisement _____

Name _____

Home Telephone # _____ Duty Telephone # _____
(in case we need more information)

Please let us know what you think of the Silver Wings:

Are you happy with the Silver Wings? Yes ☐ No ☐

What would you like to see more of in the newspaper? News ☐ Sports ☐ Photos ☐ Other _____

If you would like to give any other suggestions, please e-mail us at silverwings@columbus.af.mil.

Golfer wins amateur championship

Ray Whelan
37th Training Wing

LACKLAND AFB, Texas — A security forces instructor recently won another prestigious golf tournament after surviving the agony of a playoff and photo finish.

Staff Sgt. Jonathan Mathias, an Air Base Defense Security Forces Apprentice Course instructor with the 343rd Training Squadron here, won the Texas Golf Association South Region Amateur Championship in Houston.

During the playoff round March 20, Sergeant Mathias scored a birdie on the second playoff hole to win the championship, soon after three other rivals bogeyed or shot for par.

“That hole was good to me,” he said. “To make a birdie in the playoff made it all the more sweet.”

Through his TGA victory, Sergeant Mathias earned an exemption to play in the Texas State

Amateur Championship, set for June in Austin.

He is no stranger to winning a highly competitive golf tournament with a nerve-racking finale. Last June, he won the San Antonio Men’s Amateur Championship by only one stroke after local legend Alan Hill missed his last putt on the 72nd hole.

How does Mathias stay calm, cool and collected going down to the wire?

“In the TGA playoff, I remembered a happy place from a previous tournament, which was the Sony Open,” said the eight-year Air Force veteran. “So, my best advice about nerves, the ‘yips’ or the tension of a playoff is to go to a happy place and remember something that clicked and worked for you at that time.”

Although Sergeant Mathias is classified as an amateur, he qualified to play against PGA golfers in January at the Sony Open in Hawaii.

He shot 81-69-150 during two rounds against dozens of well-paid professionals, including the highly ranked Vijay Singh.

He missed the cut of 142 by eight shots, one stroke more than the only other amateur in the event, Michelle Wie.

However, Sergeant Mathias said the experience did not fill him with overconfidence on the course.

“Even after having the greatest opportunity in the world to tee up with the big boys on the PGA tour, I still get nervous,” Sergeant Mathias said. “That is just human nature.”

Sergeant Mathias started playing golf as a 5-year-old with just a 7-iron and a putter. Since then, his love for the game has continued to grow.

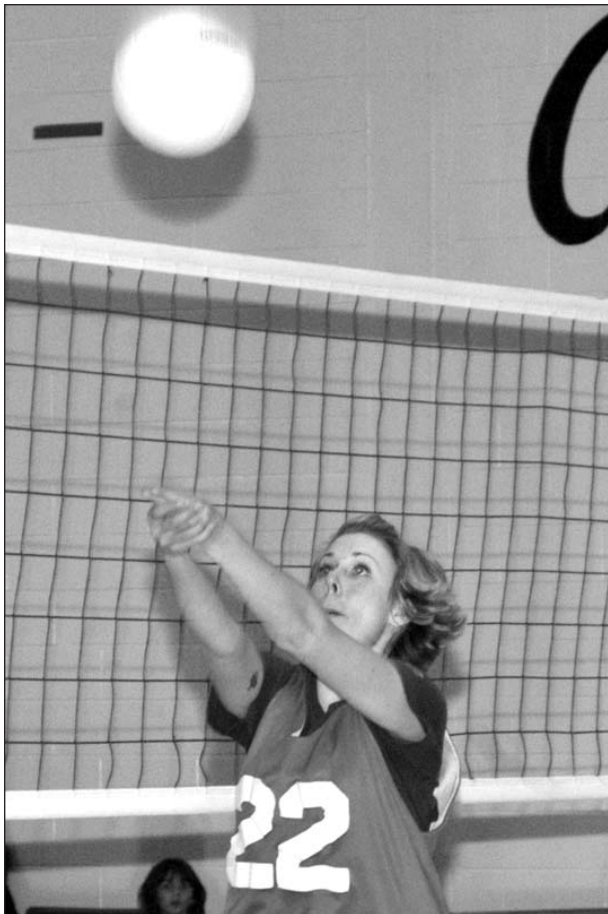
“I try to practice at least every other day, or when my family, work and school schedule allow for it,” he said.



Raymond Whelan

Staff Sgt. Jonathan Mathias, 343rd Training Squadron instructor, practices putting.

Up & away



Airman 1st Class Cecilia Rodriguez

Katie Dickenson, 14th Services Division, sends one over the net during intramural volleyball action Tuesday at the fitness center. The 14th SVS Team was defeated by the 14th Security Forces Team, 2-1.

Falcon baseballers feel Utah broom

SAN ANTONIO — The Air Force Academy Falcon baseball team had a rough weekend at the hands of the University of Utah Utes. After dropping a close game April 8, losing 8-5, the Falcons lost a pair the following day by somewhat larger margins.

In the first game of the April 9 doubleheader, the Utes pounded out 22 hits during the 22-3 win. The Falcons had six hits in that game.

In the second game, Utah set a Mountain West Conference record for most runs and hits in a game, cranking out 34 hits and ending the game in marathon fashion with 13 runs in the final inning to win 32-4. The academy managed four hits in the game. The Falcons

are now 5-23 overall and 0-9 in the conference.

In other sports news, the Falcon lacrosse team lost a heartbreaker in overtime to No. 11-ranked University of Notre Dame, 14-13.

During the match, played April 10, the two teams traded leads several times before the clock ran out. After Notre Dame was unable to convert on a few shots from close range, the Falcons had their opportunity to win it, getting a pair of shots on goal. The Irish goalie made two crucial saves, and the offense took advantage of the possession to score the winning goal. The Falcons are now 3-5 on the season. *(Courtesy of Air Force Print News)*

Shorts

Soccer balls for Iraq

The YMCA Board of Directors and Amory Kiwanis Club are currently collecting new or used soccer balls to send to Iraq, as well as donations to purchase the balls. The children there have little sports activities and some troops have discovered that they enjoy soccer. Donations may be dropped off at the fitness and sports center. For more information, call Ext. 2772.

Adult Golf 101

This two-week course for adults who have never played golf are

begins Monday. Classes are from 5 to 6 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday at Whispering Pines Golf Course. Cost is \$20 per person. Call Ext. 7932.

Lady BLAZE softball

Females interested in playing intramural softball for the Lady BLAZE team can call Shera Ferrell at 434-6991 or Stephanie Clark at 574-7287 for more information.

Youth center sports

Registration for the youth center’s tee ball, baseball and softball seasons ends today. Ages 3 to 13 are invited to participate and cost is \$25

for members or \$35 for nonmembers. For more information, call the center at Ext. 2504.

Pitch, hit & run

The youth center sponsors a pitch, hit and run competition for ages 9 to 14 at 10 a.m. April 23 at the youth baseball field. For more information, call Ext. 2504.

Three-club golf tourney

This 18-stroke play tournament begins at 8 a.m. May 21 at Whispering Pines Golf Course. Players are only allowed three clubs of their choice. To sign up, call the golf pro shop at Ext. 7932.

Columbus AFB Spring 2005 Career Day



Photos by 2nd Lt. Ryan Hardy

The B-1B Lancer from Dyess AFB, Texas, was just one of more than a dozen different aircraft static displays on hand at Career Day Saturday. The event also featured a fly-by from the B-1B, the loudest plane in the Air Force inventory.



More than a thousand BLAZE TEAM members attended the Career Day event and received the opportunity to tour static displays of variety of different aircraft from all over the Air Force.



Unlike past Career Days, this year's event not only included static displays, but aerial demonstrations of combat aircraft from past, like the "Gunfighter" P-51 Mustang pictured here. The A-10 Thunderbolt II joined the World War II aircraft for a heritage flight fly-by Saturday afternoon.

The 14th Operations Group sponsors a Career Day event twice a year for members of the BLAZE TEAM. The purpose of the event is to assist student pilots and first assignment instructor pilots with career decisions by educating them about aircraft they might have the opportunity to fly. Attendees had the opportunity to examine more than a dozen different Air Force airplanes and interact with more than 70 Air Force aircrew members.